

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSM-05 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8161
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS CAIRO 11179

E.O 11652: NA
TAGS: PBOR PDEV OVIP (ATHERTON, ALFRED) US EG IS XF
SUBJECT: CAIRO PRESS ON ATHERTON RETURN: WHAT NEXT?

SUMMARY. ATHERTON'S RETURN HIGHLIGHTED BY PRESS WITH FOCUS ON NEED FOR U.S. TO MAKE ITS POLICY EFFECTIVE. AHRAM, GUMHURIYYA, AND AKHBAR PLAY SAME THEME WITH ONLY MINOR VARIATIONS. ATHERTON STOP IN CAIRO WELCOMED, BUT HIS REAL TASK SEEN AS BEING IN ISRAEL. TO underscore THIS, AHRAM CARRIED VAGUELY SOURCED ALLEGATION THAT ISRAEL HAS RESUMED SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN WEST BANK AND SINAI. END SUMMARY.

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1. ATHERTON'S RETURN. APRIL 19 PAPERS REPORT ATHERTON TO ARRIVE CAIRO FRIDAY, MEET WITH FORMIN KAMEL SATURDAY MORNING, WITH SADAT SESSION SET FOR SUNDAY IN HURGADA. EDITORIALLY, PRESS FOCUSED ON NEXT STEPS. AHRAM DEEMED IT "IMPORTANT" FOR U.S. LISTEN TO VIEWPOINTS OF PARTIES BUT OPINED THERE NO NEED SOUND OUT EGYPT:

ITS STAND CLEAR. "ENTIRE QUESTION IS INSIDE ISRAEL."
UNFORTUNATELY, ATHERTON "KNOWS IN ADVANCE
ISRAEL'S REPLY WHICH REFUSES ALL PRINCIPLES OF JUST AND
LEGITIMATE SETTLEMENT". QUESTION, THEREFORE, IS HOW
U.S. WILL ACT TOWARD THOSE WHO THREATEN PEACE.

2. GUMHURIYYA SARCASTICALLY DESCRIBED ATHERTON'S MISSION.
AS "EXPLORATORY", TERMING SUCH CONTACTS "A POLITICAL
LUXURY" INTOLERABLE TO THOSE WHOSE LANDS WERE OCCUPIED
IN 1967 AND 1978 AND WHO ARE STILL DENIED RIGHT TO SELF-
DETERMINATION. U.S. POLICY SHOULD BE MORE AMBITIOUS
AND EFFECTIVE TO TRANSLATE PRESIDENT CARTER'S ADVOCACY
OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND PALESTINIAN HOMELAND INTO "PRACTICAL
AND POSITIVE STANDS".

3. U.S. PRESSURE. AKHBAR BOARD CHAIRMAN MOUSSA SABRI
RAN LONG, FRONT-PAGE EDITORIAL ENTITLED "WHAT SHOULD WE
EXPECT OF CARTER?" NOTED SADAT INITIATIVE PROVIDED
OPPORTUNITY ACHIEVE PEACE, AFTER ENDLESS FRUITLESS
WRANGLING OVER PROCEDURES FOR GENEVA. SABRI
ASKED "CAN THE AMERICAN POSITIVE STAND CONTINUE UNTIL
REAL PEACE HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED?". POINTED TO POWER OF
ISRAELI LOBBY, SUGGESTING MOBILIZING "TO DIVEST CARTER
OF ALL HIS POWERS AS PRESIDENT". ON POSITIVE SIDE SABRI I
SAID BEGIN'S POOR IMAGE AND AMERICAN NATIONAL INTERESTS
IN MIDDLE EAST, SAUDI PETROLEUM CONNECTION, GIVE U.S.
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WEAPONS TO PRESSURE ISRAEL. HOWEVER, THUS FAR "LIGHT
PRESSURES" DO NOT "GO BEYOND STAGE OF DRAWING ATTEN-
TION". SABRI NOTED GROWING PUBLIC OPINION FAVORING
EGYPT AND CARDS MUST BE PLAYED WITH PATIENCE AND SKILL,
BUT PREDICTED CARTER WILL COME UNDER INTENSE PRESSURE
FROM JEWISH AMERICANS. HE IMPLIED CONCERN CARTER MIGHT
WEAKEN DESPITE HIS "GOOD INTENTIONS".

4. SETTLEMENTS. AHRAM CONTAINED VAGUELY SOURCED
REPORT ("THE NEWS MENTIONED") SAYNG ISRAEL, AFTER
FREEZING SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY, HAS RESUMED WORK ON ONE
SETTLEMENT IN WEST BANK AND FOUR IN SINAI. ITEM GIVES
NO FURTHER DETAILS. EILTS

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